

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-07

SS-20 NSC-07 /066 R

DRAFTED BY DOD/ISA:PDENGLE:SLS

APPROVED BY ARA/CEN:DLAZAR

ARA/CEN/CR:JGSULLIVAN

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R 121629Z APR 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

INFO JCS/OASD-ISA

USCINCSO

COMUSARSO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MARR

SUBJECT: LEISHMANIASIS AND COUNTRY CLEARANCE
PROCEDURES

REF: SAN JOSE 0982

1. IN RESPONSE TO YOUR CONCERN EXPRESSED IN REFTEL,
ARA /CEN AND OASD/ISA-INTER-AMERICAN REGION HAVE TAKEN
A HARD LOOK AT CIRCUMSTANCES AND THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION
IS PROVIDED.

2. WITH REGARD ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT OF OFFICE OF THE
SURGEON GENERAL OF ARMY (OTSG) TO FORWARD REF.C OF YOUR
MESSAGE TO APPROPRIATE PERSONNEL FOR ACTION, OTSG-DA HAS
REVIEWED PROCEDURES FOR STAFFING SUCH ACTIONS AND REVISED
SOPS ARE UNDER PREPARATION WHICH SHOULD PREVENT RECURRENCE.
OASD/ISA HAS BEEN ASSURED THAT OTSG-DA PERSONNEL MAKING
THESE VISITS WILL BE PREPARED TO BRIEF US EMBASSIES
CONCERNED ON PURPOSE OF VISITS, AND AT REQUEST OF
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EMBASSIES WILL DEBRIEF ON VISIT RESULTS.

3. REPORT OF TRIP HAS BEEN FURNISHED THIS OFFICE AND IS HIGHLIGHTED AS FOLLOWS:

A. DURING PERIOD 10-16 FEBRUARY, COLONEL J.R. CATALDO, CHIEF OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND IMMUNOLOGY RESEARCH

DIVISION, MEDICAL RESEARCH DIRECTORATE, AND LTC JULES B. LLOYD, JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL CORPS WITH OTSG, TRAVELED TO COSTA RICA FOR PURPOSE OF VISITING WITH DR. RODRIGO A. ZELEDON, CLINICAL PROFESSOR OF TROPICAL MEDICINE, LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY - INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH TRAINING, SAN JOSE, ON A MEDICAL RESEARCH PROJECT "EPIDEMIOLOGY AND IMMUNITY OF LEISHMANIASIS". THIS PROJECT IS ONE OF A NUMBER OF SIMILAR PROJECTS FOR WHICH DEPARTMENT OF ARMY PROVIDES FUNDS TO SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN AN EFFORT TO EXPEDITE IDENTIFICATION AND TREATMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES THAT WILL NOT ONLY ASSIST HOST GOVERNMENT AND INDIGENOUS CIVILIANS IN PATIENT TREATMENT BUT WILL IDENTIFY HEALTH PROBLEMS USG PERSONNEL MAY DEVELOP WHILE IN THESE OR SIMILAR AREAS. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT DR. ZELEDON'S PARTICIPATION IN THE PROJECT IS ACCOMPLISHED IN ROUTINE TREATMENT OF PATIENTS. NO STUDIES REPEAT NO STUDIES ARE SPONSORED BY DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AGENCIES IF RISK IS INVOLVED TO FOREIGN NATIONALS.

B. LEISHMANIASIS IS A DISEASE PRODUCED BY A ONE-CELL PARASITE. THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT SPECIES OF LEISHMANIA. THE BITING FLY, PHLEBOTOMUS, IS THOUGHT TO BE CHIEFLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TRANSMISSION OF THE PARASITE FROM VARIOUS RESERVOIRS (DOGS, RODENTS, OTHER MAMMALS) TO MAN. CUTANEOUS LEISHMANIASIS MAY HAVE SINGLE OR MULTIPLE ULCERS OF THE SKIN AND THE DIAGNOSIS IS SOMETIMES VERY DIFFICULT. CUTANEOUS LEISHMANIASIS IS FOUND IN ALL SEVEN PROVINCES OF COSTA RICA. DESPITE ITS PREVALENCE, LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT THE SOURCE OF TRANSMISSION OF THE DISEASE AND THERE IS MUCH TO LEARN ABOUT THE ROLE OF ANIMALS IN ITS SPREAD. THE FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE OF THIS DISEASE HAS BEEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INCREASING STEADILY IN COSTA RICA OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS.

C. DR. ZELEDON PROPOSED TO LSU THAT, AS HE ROUTINELY TREATED COSTA RICAN PATIENTS FOR LEISHMANIA, HE ALSO STUDY THE EPIDEMIOLOGY, ECOLOGY, AND NATURAL HISTORY OF LEISHMANIASIS IN COSTA RICA. HE PROPOSED TO DEVELOP METHODS OF IDENTIFYING LEISHMANIA WHICH HE WOULD ISOLATE AND COMPARE WITH THE VARIOUS KNOWN STRAINS. STUDIES

ANIMAL STUDIES OF THE DISEASE ARE ASPECTS OF LEISHMANIASIS THAT CONCERNED THE US ARMY MEDICAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT COMMAND. PROJECT WAS APPROVED LOCALLY BY UNIVERSITY OF COSTA RICA.

D. THE "VOLUNTEER" ASPECT OF THE STUDY CONSISTED OF INJECTING AN ANTIGEN (MATERIAL WHICH PRODUCES

ANTIBODIES IN MAN OR ANIMAL) FOR SKIN TESTING INTO PEOPLE WHO WERE UNDERGOING TREATMENT FOR LEISHMANIASIS. WALTER REED ARMY INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH PROVIDED THE ANTIGEN, A PARKE-DAVIS PRODUCT WHICH HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY SUPPLIED TO WALTER REED. THIS ANTIGEN IS SIMILAR TO ONE USED FOR YEARS AS PART OF MONTENEGRO DIAGNOSTIC TEST WITH NO RPT NO NEGATIVE EFFECT ON VOLUNTEERS.

4. COLONEL CATALDO'S AND LTC LLOYD'S VISIT WITH DR. ZELEDON MAY BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

A. THE DEPARTMENT OF ARMY CONTRACT WITH LSU WILL BE EXTENDED TO 30 JUNE 1974, ALLOWING TIME FOR AD HOC BOARD OF CIVILIAN AND MILITARY DOCTORS TO CONSIDER RENEWAL PROPOSAL.

B. DR. ZELEDON WILL FORWARD PROJECT MONITOR COPIES OF CONSENT FORM AND INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW.

C. COLONEL CATALDO WILL FORWARD REQUESTED INFORMATION ON ANTIGEN TO DR. ZELEDON.

D. PRIOR TO USING A NEW ANTIGEN DEVELOPED BY DR. ZELEDON, HE WILL SUBMIT TO THE ARMY INVESTIGATIONAL DRUG REVIEW BOARD THE NEEDED ANIMAL STUDIES, COMPOSITION, METHOD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF PRODUCTION AND PROTOCOL.

E. PRELIMINARY TALKS ENSUED ON FINDING A SUITABLE ANIMAL MODEL FOR THE STUDY OF LEISHMANIASIS.

5. WITH REGARD REVEREND NUNEZ, HE DID NOT REPEAT NOT PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSION BETWEEN DR. ZELEDON AND COLONEL CATALDO. LTC. LLOYD, THE JUDGE ADVOCATE FOR THE MEDICAL R&D COMMAND WHO ACCOMPANIED COLONEL CATALDO ON THE VISIT, IS A LONG-TIME, PERSONAL FRIEND OF REVEREND NUNEZ. LLOYD'S BRIEF VISIT WITH NUNEZ WAS PERSONAL IN NATURE AND THE PROJECT WAS NOT DISCUSSED.

6. DEFENSE INDICATES DR. ZELEDON'S PROPOSAL WAS STAFFED BY ICMRT WHICH IS UNDER CHARTER OF COSTA RICAN MINISTRY

OF HEALTH AND BY HUMAN USE COMMITTEE WHICH IS REPRESENTED EXCLUSIVELY BY COSTA RICANS TO INCLUDE THE EXECUTIVE HEAD OF BOARD OF SOCIAL PROTECTION, GOVERNMENT OF COSTA RICA.

7. ARA/CEN HAS BEEN BRIEFED ON THIS PROJECT BY OFFICE OF THE SURGEON GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, AND IS SATISFIED THAT THE RESEARCH IS MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL TO COSTA RICA AND THE U.S.

8. OTSG, DEPARTMENT OF ARMY, IS PREPARED TO BRIEF INTERESTED US EMBASSY PERSONNEL AT YOUR REQUEST OR DURING THEIR NEXT ROUTINE INSPECTION VISITS TO OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES. YOU MAY ALSO RECEIVE MORE CURRENT INFORMATION ON PROJECT AND ITS PROGRESS BY VISIT WITH DR. ZELEDON WHO IS PREPARED TO GIVE YOU REQUIRED DETAILS. QUESTIONS?

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PERSONNEL, MILITARY VISITS, MEDICAL RESEARCH, PARASITIC DISEASES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE074769
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: PDENGLE:SLS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740085-0640
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740445/aaaabomh.tel
Line Count: 187
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: SAN JOSE 0982
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 SEP 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <11-Sep-2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEISHMANIASIS AND COUNTRY CLEARANCE PROCEDURES
TAGS: PFOR, MARR, CS, US
To: SAN JOSE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005